The

COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs

FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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Relief in Time of War

THE POPE'S first words in war are a plea for prayers for peace, words repeated on many occasions to many people. To the College of Cardinals Pope Pius said: "We ask from your charity, above all, this ardent, incessant prayer because it is the most powerful motive for Our hopes." And all over the world the hierarchy is leading the people to pray for peace. Secondly, the Pope strives "at least to alleviate the wounds of those already afflicted and those who will be afflicted in the future. . . . Specially, we hope that each warring nation will spare civil populations from the effects of direct military operations. That prisoners of war will be treated humanely, and that without hindrance they can receive religious comforts. That belligerents will not use asphyxiating and poisonous gases." And thirdly, for us, for neutrals, there is the immediate and pressing demand for all kinds of perfectly tangible relief. Archbishop Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, spoke directly of this upon his return to America after the war started: "In America it has always been the tradition to be in the first line of charity." A neutrality based on cold selfishness, attempting to keep safely all we have got, fortified by moral isolation, is to be despised. The first interest of Americans in the war is human interest. We must be neighbors to every combatant and the stricken families of all the warring nations. The Red Cross is already organized to make practical and effective our giving. Undoubtedly there will soon be special relief commissions to serve people overwhelmed by the particular disasters of this war. Too much in this country, so far spared the actual battles of the war, cannot be sacrificed in the work of charity for the nations already blasted.

America's Active Duty

Embargoes and the Burning of Capitols

AS THIS is written, the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate has not yet made public what bill it will submit for legislative action as a result of the President's plea for certain changes in present neutrality laws. His speech of September 22 was in many ways rather vague, but it could leave no doubt in the minds of citizens that Mr. Roosevelt still wishes us to be free to sell anything we want to the belligerent nations—munitions of war as well as its more elementary sinews. Rather less explicitly, he urged that the Congress pass measures to provide for "cash and carry" and for avoiding any extension of credits to belligerent customers. With these last provisions one can be in complete accord. It is the "cash and carry" sections of the law which must most closely be studied for weaknesses and loop-holes. The matter of doing away with the present embargo on lethal weapons is something else again. It is true that the distinction between "shipping brass tubing in piece form and brass tubing in shell form" is a trifle academic, to put it mildly. Whatever the immediate German reaction to what we do, a reaction which in any case will be mixed with propaganda, German resentment in the long run will be almost as great against one kind of shipment as against the other.

How Much Defense?

But there is more than one argument. The President pointed out that selling arms to belligerents would create employment in American industry and ambiguously added: "Incidentally, and again from the material point of view, by such employment we automatically aid our own national defense." A twofold tendency has been increasingly apparent in the policy of our national government, and in speeches of members of the administration, particularly of the President. The government has been making the country prepared for

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war. The diplomacy of the United States, the army and navy, the governmental set-up, industry and finance, the secret police and the relief administrations have been increasingly manipulated to make them all instruments of a war machine—a war nation. And there has been no doubt but that the enemy in mind has been the "aggressor dictatorships," the actual identities of which have had to be changed on occasion. That is one side. And then reciprocally, all the moves toward "preparedness," toward military, naval and all the other types of combative effectiveness, have been utilized as instruments by which to get out of the depression and achieve prosperity rather than recognized as a tax and burden on sound economy. The formidable, reciprocating machine fast being created by this policy looks like a juggernaut not easily controlled by good intentions. Before it obtains irresistible momentum, a brake ought to be pulled. War as an instrument of national policy has been condemned by this country; war as an instrument of national prosperity should be still more flatly condemned.

The Pan-American Meeting in Panama

WE ARE reliably informed that the administration is setting great store by cooperation with the nations of Latin America in the current crisis. In so far as this leads to a common neutrality policy in the western hemisphere this is welcome news. It means that the United States will not play the lone hand that led us so directly to European battlefields before. In these days of broken words and crumbling boundaries, of unprincipled deals and unilateral decisions, the neutral nations must lay the foundations for a new world order, for international relations which are carried on by free negotiation not under threat of force and are regulated by a common international law interpreted by impartial tribunals. Excesses of nationalism must give way before a growing sense of international solidarity, of the interdependence of the peoples of the world. It is in restoring international morale that we in the Americas have our greatest opportunity today.

Cushion and Spur

This is the horizon held out to the present conference at Panama, although it must perforce deal immediately with detailed, practical problems brought forward by European hostilities. Among the most difficult will be to formulate a common policy toward the belligerents, involving as it does the possibility of extending the three-mile limit to 200 or 300 miles and the constitution of an international naval patrol. Cushioning the European shock to the American economies will be another difficulty. Even more important are the proposals for the long-range economic rehabilitation of Latin America. If the United States does indeed assist the others to develop their own resources and their own industries instead of trying to exploit, the new Pan-American era will be well on the way.

The Cry for More New Ships

THE PLIGHT of belligerent shipping could hardly be presented more dramatically than in the newsphoto of four of the world's largest liners tied up to their berths on the Hudson River next to the Italian "Rex," which has since departed for sunnier climes. The leaden gray which covers the newest British passenger vessels, the "Mauretania" and the "Queen Mary," is another striking portent. To many a business man this looks like another chance to "make a dollar." There is worriment here that the President's plan to designate combat zones may drastically restrict this opportunity, an eventuality that might be balanced by Latin American opportunities if we succeed in figuring out how to build up a more sizable Pan-American trade. Winston Churchill's statement that the U-boats are under control and the establishment of the convoy system may also lead foreign ship owners to risk it anyway. But the drive for more ships is on. It is predicted that the Maritime Commission is about to step up its 50-ships-a-year program by 50 percent. It looks like another case of unsound expansion for war time. It would well fit in with any plans for the transportation of vast quantities of men and materials to battlefields overseas. The more idle new ships we have, the greater the pressure to use them, regardless of the risk.

Danger of Over-Expansion

Production for Use

RECENT YEARS have seen a stronger and stronger propaganda for subsistence homesteads, for decentralization coupled with a limited return to the soil, for the restoration to the home of many handicrafts which have progressively been disappearing into the factories. Ralph Borsodi's "School for Living" in Suffern, N. Y., has perhaps been the most successful institution to popularize such ideas and has prepared a number of excellently practical "Bulletins" telling you how to do things you probably never thought you could do. But the most encouraging thing of all is that the Department of Agriculture and the big agricultural schools seem to be seeing the light. For years these two powerful agencies placed their principal emphasis on "money-cropping," on "commercial" farming, rather than on farm industry as a means for attaining some measure of economic independence. Yet recently when Philip Henderson of the FSA announced plans for teaching farmers how to make their own butter, grind their own flour, weave their

How to Economize

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own cloth, the *New Republic* took the occasion to preach a little sermon on machine economics. It admitted that probably Mr. Henderson's plan would save the farmers money, but it felt forced to draw an industrial moral: "Here we see the trend toward technological efficiency reversed [Mr. Borsodi objects!] because we haven't enough collective intelligence to use our machines to set us free." It is a little puzzling to see how "collective intelligence" can ever lead to its antithesis, "freedom." For does the *New Republic* really mean "collective *intelligence*"? It can only mean "collective *will*" (the intelligence alone, without the will, cannot produce action). The imposition of such a will denies freedom. Factories, whether owned by "wicked" industrialists or by "righteous" workers, need the competition families can offer to take a little of the starch out of them.

Catholic Daily Paper No Nearer

A YEAR AGO the archdiocesan weekly, the *New World,* made the encouraging announcement that it was planning to test in practical fashion the possibility of launching a daily newspaper. This fall, when the Chicago *Herald and Examiner* has ceased publication leaving only one morning paper in Chicago, would have looked like a good time to begin. Unhappily the *New World* was forced to announce that "it is practically impossible to launch one to say nothing of maintaining it." The *New World* believed the daily would have "to give all the news. To furnish opinion and leadership in controversies and on questions of public interest. To appeal to non-Catholic as well as Catholic readers." Experimentation along that line has brought forth a rather bitter judgment: "Whereas the inarticulate majority of our readers possibly has no objection to such a fair presentation of the news, the articulate and even vociferous minority will have none of it. Some of this group, we are sorry to report, will not hesitate to stoop to distortion, intimidation, malicious lying and other underhanded and evil methods of making their displeasure known and, if possible, felt. . . . The articulate and vociferous minority sees the Catholic Press almost entirely as a means to bring heat and pressure to bear on their current phobia; as a stick with which to beat and intimidate those who fail to see eye to eye with them; as a convenient instrument to deny to others the rights which they claim for themselves. They see the Catholic Press not as the voice of reason, by which to convince, but rather as the big stick of force by which to compel others."

Chicago Plans Abandoned

The Chicago editors were forced to conclude: "Only by a changed viewpoint on the part of editors and readers of the Catholic newspapers, can the Catholic Press escape the classification of 'House Organs' or 'Propaganda Sheets,' the chief characteristics of which is that dead level of mediocrity and complete lack of individuality which is common alike to chain newspapers and chain stores. . . . The vociferous minority has decreed that the fixed policy of the Catholic Press is to be staid and stolid, dull and boring; its function is to record the news for future generations; its duty to correct errors in the secular press; while the very reason of its being is to join its voice, when asked, in the hue and cry over something, which if not definitely dangerous, like the abridgment of free speech, is something of little or no importance to the reader and serves only to add to the airy stature of some individual of that already too numerous group of writers and speakers whose ego is already so highly inflated." The *New World* leaves only one ray of hope feebly gleaming. It believes that possibly this condition applies only to diocesan newspapers which attempt to be at once official, Catholic, and a general newspaper, and that "a daily newspaper, Catholic in tone and sympathy, may be a possibility." In other words, lay enterprisers, rich, tough-skinned, able in business, expert in journalism, have the field open to them make another experiment and find out if this final possibility is anything more than "wishful thinking."

The "Atlantic" and Father Connell

WHEN SECULAR MAGAZINES try to present Catholic views on controversial questions the result is not always happy. The summary they present themselves too often betrays a lack of comprehension. Or the Catholic whom they secure to explain some aspect of the Faith tends to succumb to the temptation to violent and inappropriate polemic. Yet enterprising editors recognize the reader-interest possibilities in the presentation of widely conflicting views. So the *Atlantic's* symposium on the perennial question of "birth control" is quite in the ordinary course of publishing events. Last month the editors presented an article by a writer condoning the practice. This month there are two articles, one again favoring it and one presenting the Catholic point of view. Hence the sheer bulk of the arguments presented to the magazine's readers is opposed to the Catholic view. This is counterbalanced, however, by the excellence of Father Francis J. Connell's article, which explains traditional teaching in the matter primarily from the point of view of doctrine rather than expediency. The tone is calm, factual, objective. The illustrations cited to explain are particularly apt. It would be difficult for any Catholic or non-Catholic to read what Father Connell has to say without gaining in understanding and appreciation of the teaching of the Church on this important question.

An Able Exposition

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Cooperation and Religion *

The relation between religion and the co-operative movement defined and expounded.

By M. M. Coady

ONE OF THE Rochdale pioneers' fundamental principles, heartily endorsed and vigorously defended, is that cooperation shall be neutral in the matter of religion. The value of this rule can be appreciated more today when the need for it is even greater. For cooperation has moved beyond the confines of Britain and its several sects into a wide world that has innumerable forms of worship and systems of religious thought. It has moved into the orbit of men who believe in one God, of men who worship many gods, and of men who do not believe in any god at all. If all these are to find a common ground in cooperation, they must observe a common silence on their conflicting views while they face a common enemy. That unity is found through the common denominator of right reason which is the norm for every activity of society.

The fact that cooperative business cannot be run along sectarian lines does not mean, however, that religion and cooperation will bear no relation to each other. Cooperation needs religion and religion needs cooperation. The Rochdale pioneers did not become cooperators by ignoring three thousand years of religious thought. They and their principles were not the product of their own generation only. Like ourselves, they drew from the past, consciously or unconsciously. Like them, we cannot ignore any force that makes for a better world. We should be fools if we did.

Cooperation related to religion

We must not therefore mistake the Rochdale ban on sectarianism in business for a veto on religion in cooperation. Certainly, we have no justification for suggesting that cooperation is hostile to any creed or that cooperators, as such, put little stock in religion. Properly considered, cooperation postulates more, not less religion. We must have charity and justice, which have their foundation in religion, if we are not to have bigotry. Unfortunately a good deal of this bigotry finds its way into the affairs of men. There is perhaps no greater danger to the success of the cooperative movement than this very thing.

We cannot speak of Catholic cooperation or Protestant cooperation, of Buddhist, Mohammedan, Shinto, or Hebrew economics any more than we can speak of Quaker chemistry or Mormon mathematics. Truth is non-denominational and at the disposal of all. Cooperation in itself is a good thing. It is a body of natural truths acquired by the light of reason. Applied from any motive whatever, even by people without any religion, it would produce good results in the present economic and social setup which is intrinsically bad, which lacks the justice, charity and faith that cooperators regard as essential. There is a danger, however, in its very goodness. It is so promising, so just, and so marked by brotherhood that some people may want to make a new religion of it. And so we would have in our own show of the century two monstrosities side by side, the totalitarian state and the totalitarian economy. That would be even worse than using it as a proselytizing agent or as a means for bolstering decadent deities.

Those who would be cooperators and nothing else need all the help and all the dynamics that other men, especially free men dedicated to God and humanity, can give them. Cooperation has not yet advanced so far in the world, even in the most progressive countries, that it can be sure of its own strength. The whole movement for the reconstruction of society is yet in the process of making. We are still rolling the huge stone up the steep hill. If at any point in the ascent we take off the presure it will go crashing to the bottom. Before we can be sure of ourselves we have to get it firmly at rest on the plateau above. To do that is no small job. It will require all the energy and skill that can be mustered from every source. It will require the spirit that comes to men from education and the self-sacrificing idealism of religion.

Religion is not an opiate. It is food and drink. It is more vivifying and more energizing than the thin gruel of materialist philosophy. It is more stimulating too, and continued stimulation is necessary. Without it, men may grow fat, lazy, stupid, and easy victims of the bargain-dealers and quacks who would be happy to use our cooperative organizations for their own unworthy ends. Religion will not permit men to rest content with mean success but will quicken them with that divine discontent which urges man onward to loftier and more noble, more soul-satisfying heights. "The thirst that from the soul doth rise doth ask a drink

* Taken from a chapter of Father Coady's book, "Masters of Their Own Destiny," published Oct. 4 by Harper & Brothers.

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divine." To delude men into contentment with less than the greatest good is to betray their trust. That has been part of the sin of our age. We ignored the spiritual for the material good. The great accomplishment of the new age will be to restore the spiritual by using the material as it ought to be used, a means to a higher end.

But if cooperation needs religion, religion also needs cooperation. It is the expression of religion in the economic order. It is an aid to salvation that religious leaders cannot ignore. It is a naturally good thing which must be employed in perfecting the imperfect creature, man. The Christian Church embraced the philosophy of pagan Aristotle, not because it was Christian but because it was philosophy. In the same way, religious people generally will adopt cooperation not because it is religious but because it is truth. The religiously minded man will use all the good things of God's creation to further the cause of humanity and to insure the salvation of souls. He will stop talking about putting religion into cooperation and begin putting religion into cooperators. He will be so imbued with charity, honesty and courage that he will dare to change a system that is so hard, cruel, and relentless that it sins against nearly every ethical principle.

In our day, the economic question has a particular religious significance. As a matter of fact, it is the great modern religious question. For if it is not solved, freedom, culture, and religion may easily be seriously endangered. The economic question is a religious question, moreover, because the relationships of man to man are involved, the relation of employer and employee, of consumer, producer, and distributor, of individuals and the state. It is more than a question of supply and demand, more than a matter of food, clothing, and shelter. It is basic to the life of man. Economic action is intimately linked up with spiritual activities. It influences all man's action, and when his economic life is deficient there is grave danger of his spiritual life being likewise defective. Poverty is not always holy. It may frequently be a proximate occasion of sin.

There is an old theological principle about the proximate occasion of sin that has social significance for us in this regard. It is so fundamental and so common-sense that it is admitted by all. Right-minded people work on it as a general principle. It is to the effect that no man can be considered seriously solicitous about his spiritual welfare while wilfully remaining in the proximate occasion of sin. He who loves the danger shall perish in it. People brought up in close proximity to barrooms and in a generally immoral environment are not likely to become famous for sanctity. Slum conditions, poverty, and misery are the breeding ground of sin and crime. There is a moral obligation on the individual living in such proximate danger to make it remote. In most cases this does not mean that he has to do anything in the supernatural order. He simply has to get up and get out, which is a purely natural action, though, being connected with a moral situation, it takes on as a consequence a moral significance. And thus it is that cooperation, which is a perfectly natural thing, takes on an ethical and, for the Christian, a supernatural significance. It becomes the natural means whereby the occasion is made remote and the world made safe for sanctity.

That this is not a mere bit of casuistry or speculation, the history of our time amply proves. There has been a great defection from religious beliefs in our own day. In recent times, whole nations have abandoned the faith of their fathers and have adopted a philosophy that is at least materialistic and in many cases anti-religious and anti-God. The occasion for this, if not the cause, is the fact that the common people, forced to live in near social and economic slavery, are face to face with a proximate occasion of defection from the faith. On the one hand is their Christian idealism to which they want to be faithful; but they find it hard to see in it the definite economic program that will liberate them from their present difficulties. On the other hand, they are exposed to the screaming, anti-God reformers whose programs of economic reform are most attractive. They are caught on the horns of a dilemma. What will they do? It is certain that the individual, by the grace of God, need not succumb to the temptation, but man in the mass has fallen for it.

The proximate occasion must be removed if others are not to follow those who have already been led astray. The common man must be given a fighting chance to save his soul. The obligation of all religious bodies is to render the occasion remote. This can be done only by carrying out a program that is in conformity with religious principles and that will solve the economic difficulties of the people. If the maladjustments are removed, then the occasion becomes remote and the world will become a place where religion has a chance to flourish, where the weeds of greed and injustice no longer choke the flowers of virtue.

We have such flowers even now. Nobody can doubt the existence of modern saints. No one would deny that we have men and women of virtue and courage who would go to the lions in testimony of their faith and to prove their love for God and for their fellow-men. Such good and noble souls work unceasingly. But the odds are against them. A large section of the world's people are living in an environment that is so inimical to safe and decent living that they are like dwellers in an apartment house that is infected with every species of germ. Their pathetic condition appeals to us. In our charity we remove them from their surroundings, secure medical service and treatment for

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them, and restore them to normal health. Then we return them to the source of their infection. Common sense and science dictate that we should at least disinfect the premises before sending the patients back to them. Yet religious men and religious institutions are continually curing people of their moral ills and then sending them back to an unhealthy environment for further infection.

Religious men must change conditions

Moral reform is the first requisite for that housecleaning job. But moral reform alone is not enough. The vast majority of our people might become saints tomorrow, but if they had to return to immoral social, economic, and political institutions, their sanctity would be seriously threatened and would speedily degenerate. Moral reform implies that the reformed and the reformers will be intolerant of bad conditions. That is why Christianity in the beginning purged the pagan world of the immorality that characterized it. We must be realistic enough, moreover, to admit that there is little hope of bringing all the modern anti-social forces to repentance through moral persuasion alone. It is pure baby-talk and utter unrealism to expect any such marvel. The communists are right when they say we must use force. They are wrong, however, when they demand a bloody revolution. What we need is a curbing economic force which, fundamentally, comes from the idealism that is founded on religion. We cannot ask Almighty God to perform miracles of grace while we ignore the natural means now at our disposal for effecting a change.

Religion dictates as a fundamental principle that social justice should obtain in the world. It would eliminate everything in the nature of injustice and unfair exploitation. But justice alone is not enough to insure a smoothly running world. Charity is necessary that justice may be merciful, man being prone to demand his pound of flesh and more. Cooperation reinforces the idea of charity in a new and powerful way. And whatever else it may or may not contribute to the progress of man, it will have proved to humanity that religion was practical in its idealism.

Even a casual survey of society reveals the fact that vast numbers of men are not made for a highly competitive world. They cannot survive in a society that believes in the survival of the fittest only. Our present system with its jungle ethics makes it impossible for these people to contribute their share to human progress and renders it difficult for them to reach the goal that should be theirs. They can be useful members of society, however, and more easily attain their end, every last one of them, if we build society on cooperative principles. If we changed it from an aggregation of fighting individualists to an integrated body of coordinated and cooperative cells, every individual person could then be a better, more useful, and more serviceable member of the organic whole. Each could then really give according to his abilities where he received according to his needs. As they are now they are in peril of salvation. They are being destroyed in a merciless system. In droves they seek safety in our cities but are led to the slaughter instead. Or they cower alone in the shelter of their rural ruins and slowly starve in their wretchedness. In increasing thousands, our men are becoming degenerate to the point where nothing can be done for them except to transport them to a state farm. That is not good enough.

Cooperatives build brotherly society

It is not sufficient to hold out a helping hand to our fellow-men in a time of crisis. It is more in keeping with the dignity of human personality that they should be given a chance to make their contribution and to move under their own power. This is charity in the real sense of the term. Through cooperation, the embodiment of charity in economics, we can build such a society where these needy brothers will have a chance to live and to contribute to the general good and the greater glory of God.

It is difficult to see how anybody, professing to be religious, would not take seriously this duty of charity toward his more needy neighbors.

From our early years, we Christians learned that the performance of the corporal works of mercy is an integral part of a religious life. We realize that we must visit the sick, feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, redeem the captives, clothe the naked, harbor the harborless, and bury the dead. Individuals and organizations have, in their blessed charity, dedicated themselves to these holy personal offices. Like a draught of cold water upon the parched lips of one dying in the desert, their loving toil and sacrifice comes to a weary world whose soul is seared with selfishness. God be praised for such as these!

We shall have need of these always. But it is quite apparent that the scope of their charity is limited. In addition, there is need also for those who will translate the corporal works of mercy into other forms, who will reach far out into the wastes of mankind to aid through organizations those whom they cannot contact personally. They will feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, and clothe the naked by establishing cooperatives whereby the poor may obtain their daily material needs in full and adequate amounts. They will harbor the harborless, visit the sick, bury the dead, and ransom the captives by the establishment of those free, democratic, just, and charitable cooperative organizations. These will permit men to help themselves and their unfortunate neighbors and to move forward under the power of newly released group energies.

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Step-Children of the Fatherland

An article written before war was declared which still has its point and poignancy.

By **Alice Timoney**

I HAVE VIEWED some of the waves of incoming German refugees from the new account desk in a branch of a large bank which enjoys a fine international reputation. Most of those whom I have met are Jews. Naturally, I have not come in contact with those who have come entirely empty-handed. Those who have come to me have been wealthy men and women in Germany, Austria or Czechoslovakia who have brought a fragment of their former wealth out of these countries.

Back in 1931, shortly after Germany had enacted laws prohibiting the removal of capital, a thin stream of foreigners arrived in the United States, bringing with them substantial sums. They had seen the handwriting on the wall, and before such laws went into effect had placed funds in London, Amsterdam or Switzerland, which later were transferred to this country. From 1931 to 1935 we had fewer accounts, but larger amounts.

As restrictions became more stringent, we have opened many more accounts, but in correspondingly smaller sums. In June, 1938, a ruling went into effect which prohibited anyone leaving Germany taking out more than ten marks in currency. Most of the Jewish refugees, however, are permitted to transfer approximately 6 percent of their total cash wealth. Each case is reviewed independently.

To put it concretely: if you are a Jew about to leave Germany and have a balance in a German bank of 10,000 marks, these marks are blocked and known as emigrant marks. They must be offered to the Reichbank for sale at an arbitrary rate which ranges between two and three cents per mark. This works out to about 6 percent of the total value. The German government retains the remaining 94 percent. In other words, you would receive about $233 for your 10,000 marks, which, in free marks, depending on the foreign exchange market, would be worth normally $4,000.

Following the docking of each incoming boat, certain of the refugees find their way to our bank; as we have many branches and correspondent banks abroad, transfers of funds to this country are easily managed. Some send their money on ahead of them and come to our bank to claim it upon their arrival. Others bring checks drawn by banks in foreign capitals on our bank. In many instances this money has been provided by relatives who are citizens of other European countries.

In opening an account, our bank requires references and some means of identification; it has happened on a few occasions that Americans resent this procedure, evidently believing that their very faces should be sufficient to insure their responsibility. The refugee, however, despite the barrier of a strange tongue and natural bewilderment, cooperates quickly. He has only to catch the word "reference" and he instantly proffers his passport —that precious instrument which spells liberty and in some cases, life itself.

In my contact with refugees, I have observed that upon landing they usually apply for their first papers toward citizenship, and in all cases that they either seek to learn English immediately or to improve their vocabulary. To facilitate things for them I keep in my desk addresses of schools where English is taught, the address and telephone numbers of the National Council of Jewish Women and other agencies where they may receive more comprehensive information. In some instances I have been the first American contact these wayfarers have made, and often they return smiling and asking, "Am I not speaking better? Do you remember the first day I came here?"

Miracles of hope

Although in almost every instance a tragic story might be written of their experiences, they seem by some miracle of hope to be able to summon a smile. I sometimes ask if they have friends or relatives in this country; while most answer in the affirmative, a few shake their heads. Rarely does a newcomer show emotion.

A woman, however, came into the bank. She was beautifully gowned—clothes and furniture may be brought out of Germany—and she had an air of distinction. We chatted a few minutes.

"Your husband is with you?" I asked. She shook her head.

"Your children, perhaps?"

Suddenly the tears streamed down her face. Dismayed, I sought to talk of other things.

"Do not apologize," she said, putting her hand across the desk until it touched mine. "It is good for me to speak to someone. My husband died in a concentration camp. My only child died after

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a brief illness. But I am glad, *glad* they are spared my loneliness. Death itself is better."

Doctors have poured in. Some come direct from Germany. Others arrive *via* Cuba, London, Holland or Palestine, where they have awaited their visas. Examinations follow; in English, and examinations to obtain licenses to practice medicine. Many have been practicing physicians for years but are now forced to cram under coaches like any sophomore. Most doctors tell me that because of the overcrowded field in New York, they would prefer to locate elsewhere, but New York is one of the few states where the formal requirements are not insurmountable. In approximately twenty states in the Union a doctor may not obtain a license until he has become a citizen, which requires five years. Recently I was told that universities in the Third Reich are refusing to certify the degrees held by their graduates, thus placing another obstacle in the way of these men and women who are seeking to establish themselves. Yet they are not defeated. I see some standing in line before the tellers' windows with notebooks open preparing for examinations.

Some months past a refugee entered the bank. He was quick, decisive, and spoke English very well. Immediately after opening his account, he asked for an affidavit—a statement addressed to the American Consul giving the amount of money deposited to his credit—for his wife, in order that she might join him. He explained that he was a writer and lecturer, and that as soon as his English was more nearly perfect, he would endeavor to carry on his work in America. As the weeks passed he would drop in to see me occasionally. He was living, he said, in a three-dollar-a-week room and that he ate but one meal a day. That it was vitally necessary for him to conserve his little capital until he should be able to earn something. He had a tutor in English and spent three hours in a public school each morning. I inquired about his wife. She had her immigration number, he told me joyfully, and only was waiting for her visa.

Then one day he came to my desk. He had wonderful news! Not only his wife had gotten her visa and was ready to sail, but he had sold a book which had been published in Germany and which was now being translated into English! But a few days later he came to see me, the picture of despair. The pogrom following the assassination of a German attaché was at its height. He had cabled his wife. No answer. Moved, but trying to give him hope, I suggested that, as it was almost time, she had probably sailed. He shook his head. No, she had written that when she actually left Germany she would notify him. Each day he came. He could not sleep nor eat. Then on the fourth day, he fairly raced into the bank, waving a cable.

"She is safe! Safe!"

When finally she arrived, with what pride and joy he brought her into the bank to give her signing power on his account. How he boasted that her English was better than his! Of how she could help him. Of a new life in a new country.

The translation of his book is now in galley form. A lecture bureau has arranged a series of engagements for him. With almost reverent handling, he showed me the check he had received as advance royalty from his book. The first money he had earned in America.

A few more cases

A young couple came in. They had been married only a year. She was a shoe designer, and her designs were so original that within a week she secured a job with a large shoe house. The firm knew she was desperate and would accept any salary offered; the amount was $20 a week. But less than six months of this and a better house saw her merit. She is now earning $60 a week. Her husband, unable to find work, invested his small capital in a Jersey farm. He works the farm himself, although he was a textile broker in his own country. She is living in a small room in the city and joins him week-ends.

Bruno Wolfe is in his late fifties. He is a powerfully built man, who must have resembled a Viking in his youth; certainly he does not look Semitic. He told me his story. He had owned a fleet of trucks in Germany and made a good living. When he arrived in this country with his wife and son he had salvaged about $1,000. He could not find work, but his wife secured a job as maid in a hotel, and his son worked as a delivery boy after school hours.

To contribute to the family income, Mr. Wolfe leased a five-room apartment. When his furniture arrived, he made his home attractive and rented out two rooms.

"My wife is weary when she comes home, so I do all the work. I cook. I make beds. I go to market. I clean, clean, clean. I did not know before how women have it in the home."

He attended school and there met a fellow refugee who had written an informative brochure for the use of motorists. Mr. Wolfe became the publisher of this handy little book—a sort of first aid, legally, to the driver who is the victim of, or participates in, an accident. A book, which besides the necessary space for jotting down facts concerning the accident, also includes a pencil and tape measure, done up in cellophane and fastened to the inside back cover. Factual and tangible evidence inscribed at the time of an accident may win a law-suit later on; in any event, should the motorist be in the wrong, the data aids him to make the best of a bad case.

It seems to me that the helping hand America has extended in the past to the oppressed has ulti-

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mately benefitted the country both spiritually and tangibly. A feeling of sympathy and tolerance enlarges the horizon not only of the individual, but that of a nation as well.

The merry-go-round of international politics has become a tragic-go-round for the refugee. He must spin around, desperately holding fast to whatever anchor is provided him. He has been compelled to make an exit from a stage where he knew his lines; now he is forced to make an entrance into an arena in which he has had no experience, and where, because of his strange tongue and foreign manner, the audience reviews his performance with suspicion, if not hostility.

In spite of this, many are making their way here. Native born Americans have allowed money that would normally be used in financing new enterprises to accumulate in banks. This is not the case with the refugee. He cannot afford to wait. When he has sufficiently mastered the language and learned something of our business methods, he strikes out into business for himself. Because many have been leaders in their respective fields in Europe and because they have education, grit and determination, I believe, and hope, their efforts will be rewarded by success.

"This is the land to which I have looked forward, a nation where I hope to live peacefully. I shall not look back. Nor should I hesitate to die for so glorious a land." These were the words said to me recently by a refugee; his eyes were earnest, his demeanor sincere.

With such endowments of courage and loyalty added to ability, I believe that the refugee will contribute enormously to the common good of the United States. Step-children have been known to yield big returns both spiritually and materially to the host who proffers sanctuary.

Canada: 1914, 1939

From war's beginning to war's beginning twenty-five years and one month elapsed; what changes came?

***By* Observer**

WHAT FOLLOW are impressions. Purely and simply impressions. I do not desire to make any judgments whatever, though of course one cannot help one's feelings coloring one's impressions, one's beliefs affecting the way things strike him. But as far as I am consciously able, I have tried to keep these paragraphs free of the color of my own judgment and have tried to indicate certain differences in Canadian attitudes, which seem to me to be objective differences, between August, 1914, and September, 1939.

I am not a Canadian, nor have I any Canadian blood, but I spent five months out of every year on Canadian soil until I passed my majority, and in no year since have I failed to spend at least a few weeks in the Dominion. I know intimately the language of the French Canadians and the Province of Quebec. I know as persons scores of English Canadians from Ontario. I have a bowing acquaintance with the Maritime Provinces. For the Western Provinces I cannot speak, but after all the wealth of our northern neighbor, even more than our own, is concentrated in the East. More even than by its economic power, the public opinion of the East determines Canada's course.

In 1914 I was nine years old. Small boys of nine are not, perhaps, the most reliable observers of public affairs, but the age is highly impressionable. And war makes an impression considerably greater than other historic events. Many things have happened since that I do not remember at all, but I doubt if I ever shall forget July and August, 1914, in St. Irenée-les-Bains.

As the name implies, St. Irenée was a small rural hamlet with a population of its own that lived there the year round but also with a summer population that still had enough Victorian propriety to like the idea of going to a place which had "baths." I've never been quite sure whether the "baths" had a connection with bathing in the St. Lawrence, which lies impassive in front of the hillside on which the town and the summer hotel is built and which is, at all times and seasons, beautifully garbed in shifting colors so incredible that any artist foolish enough to try to paint them will doom himself to condemnation on the score of sentimentality—such colors cannot exist in nature. The river is beautiful enough to attract bathers, and St. Irenée has a handsome beach. But anyone who seriously attempts a swim is in for a shock. The usual summer temperature of the water is about 46 degrees Fahrenheit; to a swimmer it is likely to seem well below freezing. Only an occasional man or woman of iron will brave it. Perhaps the "baths" related to some peculiarly evil tasting and smelling springs which poured out of holes in the hillside and ran their sulphurous

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course down through a hay-field. Their waters must be supersaturated with sulphur indeed, for I vividly recall how each particular frond of timothy or stem of weed that stood in the water soon became coated with a thick whitish deposit of stuff that smelled and tasted the same—only much stronger—as the water itself. But I never saw anyone drink of these fountains except in a spirit of scientific curiosity, much less bathe in this noisome effluvia.

In such a setting—there was a particularly large number of yellow lady slippers in the fields that July of 1914—a summer colony of perhaps a few hundred Canadians enjoyed the mild recreations of a very simple resort. Most of these visitors were French, from Quebec and Montreal. Many were involved in politics and had considerable fortunes—there were two or three Sirs and Ladies in the group. There was also a scattering of English-speaking people broad enough in their human sympathies to be willing to be frequenters of a predominantly French community. I and my parents were the only Americans.

Late June and early July went by uneventfully enough, as far as I was concerned. But late July was different.

I can remember that a certain hush of expectancy seemed to be in the very air; Boer war veterans began to look worried, and the good ladies who had sons or husbands or fiancés of military age began to look a little worried, too.

We went into August in an atmosphere of hush and mild anxiety. But I cannot in the least recall that any of this feeling had communicated itself to the permanent inhabitants of the place. They went on about their rural affairs very much as usual, as though anything that happened in Europe could not possibly concern them.

Then it happened. England and France had declared war. Almost over night there was not a man left in the summer colony—and not a man gone from the village. Within what now seems to me an incredibly short time (it was probably in fact much longer: memory has telescoped days and perhaps even weeks) official notices were tacked upon the telegraph poles . . . "His Majesty George V, by the Grace of God . . ." calling upon all the King's loyal subjects to enlist. Evidently all his loyal subjects were summer visitors, who had, as reserve officers or government officials, already gone to their posts; the proclamations had no effect on the permanent inhabitants, most of whom could not read them anyway. I got the impression that this was a war for ladies and gentlemen, not for farmers or blacksmiths or wool carders.

As time went on

This impression stayed with me as the war years went by. Our family was not always at St. Irenée, but was always in its vicinity—sometimes at resorts predominantly English Canadian, sometimes at places full of Americans. Where there were English or French of the dominant class, there were no men . . . only women and children and tales of atrocities and hatred of Germans. Among people of the English-speaking working classes—fresher, perhaps, in their old country loyalties, more literate and therefore better able to read about what was going on in Europe, and the more susceptible to propaganda, too—men also were scarce and mourning a commonplace.

But the French farmers continued to be unimpressed. Crops were bringing such cash prices as had never been known in the memory of man; tidy little balances were growing in banks, and to the credit of men who had never before had bank balances. A few young blades, eager for adventure, enlisted. . . .

Conscription did not much change the situation. If any officer of the King should appear on the scene to gather in the recalcitrant, there were always the mountains and swamps and forests of the Laurentians. Disappearing into them for a few weeks would be a welcome change from the monotony of agriculture, with a pleasant bit of fishing and hunting thrown in. . . . And was not France, where this fighting went on, a land of atheists and priest-haters and traitors to the Holy Father? . . . Let city boys and the English fight if they wished. Preferably the English.

Twenty-five years later

". . . There were times when you could get nearly fifty dollars a cord for pulp wood, and you can cut nearly two cords a day. But times have changed. Five, six, perhaps even twelve dollars a cord—supposing you are lucky enough to own woodland—is pretty skimpy when you have to haul it yourself; and when you work for others (if you're lucky enough to get a job), a dollar and a half a day—two at the most—isn't very much for a family to live on. There are plenty of families without farms among us French Canadians in these times, and everybody has cousins or brothers or sisters in the cities, entirely dependent on industry for a living. But industry has not been supplying many livings through the last years. Nor is relief exactly what you would call generous. Then, too, most people can read newspapers nowadays; we aren't like our forefathers, who contented themselves in benighted ignorance. We know what is going on in the world. Do we not read how that Hitler is persecuting the Church? And the wicked communists! Russia is a country without God. France? Well, she still has atheists and some seem not to like the priests. Perhaps they have reasons for that. But the Church exists in France; it has not been molested since the war. That is better than Germany; not to be compared with Russia.

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"They say there is to be another war. My father has often told me how in the last war he could sell a load of hay for enough money to pay a year's taxes, and how the young men in winter could earn seven and eight dollars a day in the logging camps. They say that if there is a war, I will be able to enlist and the government will pay me more than a dollar a day, free and clear. And my wife will get another dollar, each of the little ones almost fifty cents as long as the war lasts, and after, if I am killed.

"Is it not better to risk being killed than to sit wondering whether the mill will open again? And even if it does, what will I make? If war comes, I will enlist. At worst I will have to kill a few Germans and Russians, perhaps I will be killed myself. It's well worth it! I will be serving God, providing for my family. My father will again sell hay at a fine price. Let us have a war and drive Hitler and the communists off the face of the earth. And then it will be a change, too, from this life that is not a life—this life we are living. . . ."

That is what one heard everywhere in French Canada during the last days of August, 1939. One heard it, of course with modifications, in village and hamlet and city. I don't doubt that the farmers of St. Irenée-les-Bains were saying it, as I know that the working people of Rivière Mailloux were saying it and the people of St. Siméon and Kamouraska and Rivière du Loup.

The ladies and gentlemen were not quite so sure, this time, although there were those who felt that England would have once again to bear the white man's burden. Yet they hoped it would not happen. They kept hoping up to the bitter end; maybe they are hoping still. But there was never a question of Canada's staying out, once the die is cast. And there were those who hoped that the die would be cast, if possible at Mr. Hitler's own, personal head. . . . Only the young women openly cried, when England declared war. As children they had known so many widows, and so many hopeless old-maids-before-their-time, who had young officers enshrined in their hearts, young officers long since beyond mortal help. The mothers of sons wept inwardly, for they knew how close each one of them had been to being an old maid before her time.

It was the same thing in the Maritimes. In Edmonton they had arrested a German for a spy when I got there—the day Canada herself declared war. Everyone was saying that the people now wanted war—a war for which, of course, the people had been prepared by the ideological struggles of recent years. The government didn't want it, and the young women and the mothers. But everyone else did, so the government had delayed a week and then yielded to the will of the people. All sorts of rumors were flying about. Hundreds had already enlisted. The army was being really tough about it. . . . A young fellow had got drunk the other night just after enlisting. They tore up his enlistment papers. Another chap on sentry duty had talked to his girl. He was put in solitary confinement. . . . Five hundred were going from Edmonton to Valcartier for training. . . . St. John's had had two black-outs; they had distributed gas masks to all the school children.

At New Glasgow, before Canada declared war, we stopped for gas. It was a busy station, and there was only one attendant. We had to wait for several cars ahead of us to be filled up. More in impatience than expecting an answer, I asked the solitary attendant why he didn't have another man. "I own this station," he said, "and I've had a helper right along, giving him a steady job. Now he's gone to enlist, I've not been able to find anyone else." Naturally I wondered at such excessive patriotism in a man who had steady employment. The owner felt the same way. "I was in the war last time. Four years. Three and a half of them I spent in a German war prison. It doesn't interest me. But you can't tell the young fellows that; they are enlisting now so as to be sure to get in. If they are accepted, they get $1.30 a day themselves, and their wives get a dollar, and each child gets an allowance of . . ." It was the same tune and the same words as I had heard in French a week before.

The Alien, Dead

This is a dirge tonight, with the light
and cold rain falling,
For the alien lost from his band in a land
that was rude to his heart,
Lying with ears stopped fast at last
to the ceaseless calling
Of a shore, of a plain, of a hill, to the will
that was broken apart.

Tonight is the song, in the rain, from Spain
for the Spaniard asleep
In the sallow mist that slips and drips
from the English leaves;
This is the breath of home, from Rome
to the Roman death-deep
In the barrow; this for the ghost that is lost
and the bone that grieves.

This is word and air for the smart in the heart
that troubled the flesh
Of the stranger, alone; this is stave for the grave
of the Jesuit priest
In the woods of Maine, French-bred, and dead
under blueberry mesh.
This is friendship's ease to the pain of the brain
now the need has ceased.

JOSEPHINE JACOBSEN.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

WHEN ROBINSON CRUSOE in the solitude and isolation of his island life philosophised about his condition and prospects he committed to his diary a form of reflection which since Defoe invented it for the use of his immortal hero—or at least gave it publicity and currency, for no doubt the method itself is as old as humanity—has been used by innumerable other people, both in fiction and in life. It is a sort of book-keeping method, which came quite naturally to a thoroughly commercial-minded Englishman like Defoe. Crusoe drew up a credit and debit account of his situation. On the debit side he put down all, or at least the chief, facts of his situation as a castaway on the uninhabited isle. On the credit side he placed not only the things that in spite of all the evils he could still enjoy, or even rejoice about, but also the evils which he had escaped and evils which had befallen other men which might have happened to him, but had not.

A great number of Americans are consciously or unconsciously following Crusoe's method nowadays. The hundred-percent isolationists, indeed, appear even to imagine that Americans are collectively a nation of Robinson Crusoes, cut off and protected from all the dangers as well as all the disasters that have befallen the rest of the world and that this happy condition may be permanently preserved if only the nation will keep the embargo clauses in the Neutrality Act and in other ways cut off all connection with Europe and its wicked ways and foolish peoples. They write down, like Crusoe, on the debit side of the national ledger, some of the misfortunes or evils of our present condition—for example, our ten to twelve million unemployed workers, our huge debts that never can be substantially reduced, but must grow, until or unless the idle workers can become self-supporting, and many other grievous facts. But on the other side of the ledger they are able to write down the enormous truth that our nation is not at war and their conviction that it can and must continue to stay out of the war.

Even those Americans who would not wish to be classified as isolationists agree with this view; but as the debates which will begin this week in Congress and which already have flooded the press and the radio and the mails with preliminary matter will amply prove, the real issue to deal with is the means, not the desirable end in view. The view that to change the embargo law now, when the war is on, is to open the gate to our almost certain—in fact, many isolationists do not hesitate to say, our "inevitable"—entry into the war is becoming increasingly popular, if not more cogent, as Father Coughlin and other manipulators of mass sentiment increase their pressure upon the Congress. Yesterday Father Coughlin issued his instructions to his followers, assigning them their "quota" of letters and telegrams for this week. A mere "ten million," it seems, should be enough for this week. As the weeks continue, what amount will be reached may be left to the mathematical imagination of the publicity staff.

If the proponents of this particular view were really consistent, they would of course demand that not only airplanes designed for war and actual war weapons, guns and shells and powder and gun cotton and so forth, but also the materials and tools and partly finished articles which are used in war and oil and gasoline and metals to be employed in war should equally be barred to all belligerents and also barred to nations not now at war who might, and who of course will, if possible, re-ship all or part of such materials to the nations actually at war. To create such a hullabaloo over the single point of munitions, leaving the far greater trade in other war materials severely alone, is to rob the whole controversy of reality.

Will this point really come to the front and be thoroughly debated and the great decision formed after facing all and not merely a selected group of facts? Let us hope so, and let us try to bring it about. More is at stake in the Congress debate and its accompanying popular debate than the question of the change or the retention of the present embargo on weapons and loans to belligerent governments. Behind the embargo debate looms the unresolved but unescapable crisis of our 1940 presidential election, complicated by the third term issue and further complicated by the lack in both the major parties of leaders who are judged by the American public to be of real Presidential quality. And back of these problems, already so grave, lies the still greater question of how well our democratic processes can stand the test to which the world revolution is now subjecting it. Some of the most experienced Washington publicists predict that debate in the Congress over the embargo problem will last for weeks, perhaps for months. So too, of course, will the public debate. Communist and Nazi propagandists and British and French and Polish and Canadian propagandists will certainly be active, if not always publicly so. From coast to coast and from north to south, all our people will be involved in the debate; so, too, will be all the nations of both North and Central and South America. The debate will furnish the greatest test of our institutions, and our capacity for self-government, ever furnished us. Well and good that it should be so. To revert to Robinson Crusoe, our country, compared with Europe, is an island of peace and beatitude. But the calm we enjoy may well be the calm which is at the center of a surrounding hurricane. Will that hurricane burst in upon our calm and safety?

But at this point the figure of speech breaks down. Nothing can avert a hurricane; the best that human science and wisdom can do when hurricanes appear is to warn as to their most probable course and provide certain safety measures. But our course will be decided by our own will, motivated by our own knowledge, guided by whatever wisdom we, and our responsible leaders especially, may possess. If we really believe that our first duty to our own interests and those of humanity calls for an embargo, then I for one demand that we should be honest and call for a complete, not a partial, embargo—and pay the price for it. But I for one believe we should drop the embargo and permit the sale of arms. Not to do so is to give Communism and Nazism another great victory, perhaps great enough to lead to their world-wide triumph.

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Communications

NEUTRALITY

Williamsport, Penna.

TO the Editors: I have considered the very real danger that America may become involved in the second world war; and, as any Catholic must do (particularly those who, like myself, are in their twenties, healthy, unmarried and without dependents of any nature) I have tried to consider if any condition short of actual invasion of the United States would constitute a just cause which it would be morally right for me to defend.

Shall we fight to preserve America's freedom on the seas or her right to pursue world commerce, whether with neutral or belligerent nations? Shall we fight in an attempt to protect the lives of Americans remaining in Europe? If we do, it means that we shall send hundreds of thousands of American youth to death to show that Americans *should* be guaranteed protection for their properties in Europe; *should* be allowed to sail the seas and trade internationally without being attacked, and *should* be allowed to remain in war zones unmolested.

What morality permits us to resort to means that would exceed in evil results the evil we seek to overcome? Does it not seem obvious that no amount of property is worth the extinction of one human life, nor any amount of trade? As for the American still in Europe, let us speak frankly. They are in greater or less danger depending upon their nearness to war zones. Quite possibly many of them will be killed. But could their deaths justify the loss of more—many more—lives through our entry into the European war, the extent and duration of which we cannot know?

Let us admit it: the seas must be surrendered to the belligerents, some of whom may not scruple at attacking neutral vessels; and despite the economic losses that will undoubtedly result from cessation of commerce, as long as the war lasts we must not endanger the fate of our country by insisting on the right to trade internationally and the right to expect governmental protection while so doing.

Depression? Of course we will suffer depression from such drastic curtailment of a trade based on peacetime conditions. But the immediate losses we would endure to save the male youth of our nation would be nothing compared to the depression we shall suffer after the war ends.

The evil which dominates Europe today does not confine itself to one nation or one battlefront. It is not circumscribed. Satanism does not seem to be staying within its own circle. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that it will grow tragically, unceasingly. But it need not grow so large as to cross three thousand miles of water and touch our shores if we do not attempt to profit by the war or save the world from evil again. . . .

I cannot kill a man, except in the extremest need of self-defense. If I killed a man in a war which I did not believe to be indisputably a morally just war, I doubt if I could ever walk in the sight of God with a completely peaceful conscience, or be sure of retaining my sanity. Therefore, I cannot assent to submit myself and my conscience to the authority of others who would send me from my own country to a place where I should be forced to shoot, knowing that to do so would not necessarily protect me from being shot.

This is what I wish to know: What will you do with me, and with other young men who think as I do, if America enters the second world war, and Congress passes the Selective Service Act ordering us to enlist?

DONALD H. DICKINSON.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Let us be grateful for our neutrality, but let us be on guard lest our gratitude be that of the Pharisee, thankful that he was not as other men are. And that kind of gratitude I find too prevalent in many pleas for neutrality, with their implied assumption that we Americans are not as sinful in the sight of God as Europeans are and implied denial of our fellowship in Christ with all peoples.

Let us be grateful, on the contrary, that God has not dealt with us according to our iniquities but according to His loving kindness. For it is due to no merit of ours, but to the grace of God that American people today are not suffering the agony of their brothers across the seas.

Only as it is moved by this Christian spirit of gratitude can our neutrality prove a blessing to us and to all peoples. Only in this spirit can we as a neutral nation bring to the post-war world the peace not of a conqueror, but of a friend to all peoples.

Not the least need of a war-exhausted world will be that of the counsel and help of one nation that has isolated itself from hatreds that have rent it not merely to save its own skin, but to bring the resources of a people that through the grace of God has escaped the common world destruction to the relief and rehabilitation of the victims of this terrible disaster.

Neutrality, if conceived of as purely a selfish national policy, carries with it no security that it will keep us out of war; but if conceived of as a world Christian policy, it carries with it the promise of a just and lasting peace to the whole world.

FRANK D. SLOCUM.

HOW BIRDS TALK

Altoona, Pa.

TO the Editors: I desire to thank Frederic Thompson for his interesting article and THE COMMONWEAL for publishing it—"How Birds Talk" (September 22). It gave me great pleasure. Any close observer of birds can confirm what Mr. Thompson writes. I now understand the story told of Saint Francis of Assisi ("the *only* Christian who lived since the time of Christ," someone wrote—it may be "an exaggerated truth," as a friend of mine called it) who preached a sermon to the birds and had (which does not always hold for many listeners of sermons) an attentive audience.

I like the position of THE COMMONWEAL on the neutrality question now before Congress. It is safe and sane. In fact I would apply that Frenchman's formula to the paper: it grows better and better in every way with each issue. Prosit! Go ahead!

REV. MORGAN M. SHEEDY.

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MINNESOTA HOBBLES LABOR

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: In his article entitled "Minnesota Hobbles Labor," appearing September 22, Mr. Gilbert E. Carlson complains rather vigorously on the unequal restrictions placed on labor by the new Minnesota Labor Relations Act. There may be some merit in Mr. Carlson's arguments as applied to the particular act which he has under discussion. On the other hand he fails to make any constructive suggestion as to how to meet the arguments advanced by the proponents of the act. . . .

I do not pretend to have examined the Minnesota Labor Relations Act. For its contents I depend on Mr. Carlson and upon newspaper accounts. However it would appear to be a type of act which seeks to balance the inordinate inequalities of the Wagner Act in favor of labor. Alongside of the gross and obvious discriminations of the Wagner Act the alleged inequalities of the Minnesota act appear to be somewhat subtle and relatively unimportant.

Abuse of power by irresponsible labor leaders is by every token as great a menace to the welfare of our community, to social justice and to the rights and security of our poor and oppressed as ever were the greed and oppression of irresponsible employers. The Wagner Act has served in great part to curb the employer. It is high time to curb the labor unions and it would seem to me that efforts toward that end might come with good grace and effect from hard-headed idealists in labor's own ranks.

Most of the current opposition to unionization in our great industries comes not from any wish to oppress the worker by long hours, low pay and bad working conditions. Quite the contrary. Industry's chief weapon against the union has recently been to increase wages, shorten hours and improve working conditions to a degree beyond even the unions' present demand. But such opposition comes from a very reasonable fear of placing in the hands of irresponsible labor leaders the power to bankrupt a great enterprise by their unlimited right to strike. . . .

The popular idea that labor "gains" merely shift wealth from the rich to the poor is highly misleading. Such "gains" in fact tend to effect higher costs and higher prices which must be paid by the rest of the community, or tend in the alternative to accelerate the mechanization of production. In either event employment is apt to be curtailed. In a non-subsidized industry operating on a small margin of profit the chain of events seems to be inescapable. The excessive per diem rate of pay in the New York City building trades is an important factor in producing the bad housing situation in that city. Incidentally it has also increased the unemployment in the building trades themselves. Thus poverty and sub-normal living conditions have been an outgrowth of the "gains" which unions have achieved in the New York building industry.

But I am getting far afield. To return to where I began, I believe that Mr. Carlson's Minnesota opponents may *have* something when they say "that wages were being increased to the detriment of farmers whose living costs were proportionally raised; and that constructive industries were driven out of Minnesota by a few irresponsible labor leaders." . . .

PAUL V. CARPENTER.

Points & Lines

The Philippine Islands

ONE ITEM of war news not much featured was reported thus by the *Christian Science Monitor:*

> Dispatches from Manila today record the arrival in the Philippines of the US aircraft carrier Langley, and the momentarily expected arrival of 15 long-range patrol bombing planes which left Honolulu last week. Thus for the first time a substantial American air force is being assigned to the Philippines, and the event is of first-rate significance in the development of Far Eastern policy.

Rex Miller, in the *Monitor,* proposes that:

> The force of events has brought about an arrangement which British and American naval men—and diplomats—have been talking about for some time: the British will look after the Atlantic, if the Americans will look after the Pacific. . . .
>
> The British are concerned with what Germany will do unless halted; the Americans are concerned with what Japan may do unless stopped.

Once again it is an obvious observation to make, that in case this country joined the world war, the first military duty assigned us would be to ride herd on the eastern empires of the western democracies.

In the Philippines themselves, ever since the passage of the Independence Act in 1934, there has been a growing movement to interrupt the ten-year course which is supposed to lead the islands to independence in 1946. The New York *Herald Tribune* reports that in the present session of the Philippine National Assembly the politicians against independence have finally come out strongly and publicly:

> A move to ask the United States to postpone Philippine independence indefinitely was presented to the National Assembly tonight on what appeared for the first time to be a soundly organized basis, when José Romero, an influential member of the legislature, delivered a fiery speech calling for the re-examination of the 1946 freedom plan. . . .

The speech he made attacked the line of the present Secretary of Agriculture:

> "I expected Aquino to reassure us that the much-feared collapse of our industries and commerce would not occur after independence. Aquino said he preferred poverty with freedom to rich enslavement, but are we really slaves? . . .
>
> "We are not slaves now, but may yet be if we refuse to recognize the logic of contemporary events," Romero continued, referring to a possible Japanese conquest. Should that happen, he said, "we can lose not only face but body and soul by another invasion. No nation will despise us for pausing to re-examine a national problem in this era of international anarchy and in face of the danger of economic chaos."

An article in the September number of the *Political Science Quarterly,* by Grayson Kirk, deals at length with "Philippine-American Relations."

> The present status of Philippine-American relations is the result, primarily, of skilful manipulation by powerful pressure group interests at Washington. Even before the onset of the depression Cuban sugar interests had become greatly alarmed over the inroads made by duty-free Philippine sugar in the American market. Similarly, a strong

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> congressional farm bloc had become obsessed with the belief that low-cost imports of Philippine sugar and cocoanut products were having a depressive effect upon the price level of many American farm products. Such an argument could be demolished with comparative ease by any expert and impartial examination, but the bloc leaders and their lobbyist advisers made up in vociferousness and determination what they lacked in accuracy. Filipino politicians, who had maintained their local prestige for three decades by clamoring for an independence which was safely unattainable, now found to their secret dismay that this farm bloc, prompted by the ravages of the depression and abetted by the American-owned Cuban sugar interests, was determined to give them their freedom—and with a vengeance. . . .
>
> This revised independence act of 1934 provides the basis for the present ten-year transitory régime. . . .

The régime really gives the ultimate power to the United States wherever this government wants to exercise it. Two types of trade control were instituted:

> Certain products—sugar, cocoanut oil and cordage—which had been the special butt of American criticism were placed on a quota basis. Beginning with the fifth year of the Commonwealth period, the Philippine government is to be required to impose an export tax on all products shipped to the US. This tax will be increased each year, with the result that in the final year Philippine goods will be subject to 25 percent of the regular American duty.

The present Philippine worry is especially over the sugar and cocoanut industries, which are by far their most important industries and which would be wiped out by the following of the system set up five years ago. After investigations and reports there is now a recommendation in Washington that the Commonwealth period of transition be prolonged until 1960—or at least preferential trade relations. Congress, however, has been most apathetic in dealing with the Philippines. The political situations in the Far East may bring a change.

> Within the Islands two things have served to dampen the original ardor for complete separation from the United States. The first of these is, quite naturally, the fear of economic collapse. . . . The second fear is Japan. . . . Many Filipinos have become so alarmed that they would prefer to forego the dangers of independence for the security afforded by the American flag. Others disagree, arguing with a recent editorial in the *Herald* of Manila that, "if Philippine independence is contingent upon conditions in the Orient, how can they become any better? If Japan wins in China, she will be more feared than ever. If Japan is destroyed by China or Rusia, these may be threats to the Philppines. Making Philippine independence basically contingent on Oriental conditions means no independence at all."

Mr. Kirk believes that "certain propositions seem almost self-evident."

> First, there should be no political withdrawal from the Islands if the United States has, or seems likely to have in the future, any interest whatever in maintaining the independence of the Philippine Republic. . . . The United States should not withdraw politically if it is to maintain any prestige in, or to exert any influence over, the general course of developments in the Orient.

This article is somewhat paralleled by the September *Foreign Policy Report*. The latter takes into some consideration the war which must have broken after the main work of preparation was finished. It concludes:

> If Japan seizes the opportunity to drive foreign interests from China now that Britain and France are engaged in a European war, national expediency would probably dictate indefinite postponement of Philippine independence.

The Screen

"Down the Arches of the Years"

SELDOM do we have films as forceful and moving as "Full Confession," which gains in power as its story is wound tighter and tighter while burly Victor McLaglen is pursued through the dark streets of a mean neighborhood by a priest and his own conscience. The picture is of particular interest to Catholics because its plot centers around the priest's having heard a confession of murder which of course he cannot tell even though the revelation would free an innocent man. How the priest solves the dilemma is told with gripping suspense and a spattering of tears. In directing, John Farrow spotted grim realism with highlights and shadows. Mr. McLaglen, experienced as the brusk, insensitive criminal, plays the lead convincingly; and jovial Barry Fitzgerald is thoroughly at home in the rôle of the tippling Irish watchman condemned for a crime he did not commit. But it is Joseph Calleia who turns in the surprise performance. After many gangster-racketeer types, his portrayal of Father Loma, with restraint, strength and understanding, deserves great applause. The effective acting of these three men is heightened by the capable assistance of Sally Eilers and Elizabeth Risdon.

Having made "Confessions of a Nazi Spy," Warner Brothers now rushes in with "Espionage Agent," which is some more of the same, but not quite so well done. This time our Foreign Service Department, "America's first line of defense," preaches peace and isolation and goes the long way round to prove that America needs better counterespionage. An International Spy Ring, certain that Americans are stupid or indifferent, almost succeeds in obtaining the necessary plans for blowing up our factories in case of war. However, Joel McCrea and Brenda Marshall, formerly an enemy spy but now married to Joel, track down the ring and expose them after harrowing adventures in Switzerland. Director Lloyd Bacon reiterates that Americans should let the hatred of Europe remain over there among all the powder kegs.

You wonder, when you see such a thoroughly amusing picture as "Honeymoon in Bali," why Hollywood doesn't turn out more real entertainment. Not that this film will roll you in the aisles. Its thin story goes dull a couple of times and lacks surprises. But it all seems so facilely clever. Under Edward H. Griffith's direction, a bright cast makes the witty lines sparkle. You know that career-woman Madeleine Carroll, who is much too keen on personal freedom without family cares and love affairs, will eventually fall for cock-sure Fred MacMurray. But you'll have fun watching her lose her selfish ideals on the unmarried state. Everyone in the picture has a swell time: Helen Broderick wisecracks; Allan Jones sings; a right smart, new girl, Osa Massen, ogles Fred; Carolyn Lee, a sweet child, melts your heart except when she is given overly precocious lines; Akim Tamiroff does a bit part to perfection; even a freckled-face messenger boy is delightful when he sings a birthday greeting. "Honeymoon in Bali" will snap you out of the doldrums. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books of the Week

Story and Theme

Escape, by Ethel Vance. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $3.00.

IF "ESCAPE" is not forthwith converted by Hollywood into a movie, one domestic effect of the war will be beyond argument. A good novel, it has even more the quality of a better scenario. The book being one long flight, the director should obviously be Alfred Hitchcock. The reason the war might block it (or fetch it a fabulous price) is that "Escape" is not neutral toward the Nazis.

It is a story with pace, chain line development, tension and a mysterious, half-unreal, half-terrifying atmosphere which make for easy and fast reading. The novel is very much of a mixture, in part rather sophisticated, well done and mature, but of no unusual character, and then it is partly a serious attempt to portray the spiritual atmosphere of Nazi Germany. All through it is also a mystery melodrama. A good *tour de force,* which seems at the edge of entering a superior classification of prose fiction.

It is primarily a "plot" novel, assembling the people and accidents and relationships which make possible the exit of an attractive and vital retired actress from the hospital of a concentration camp. Her son, a young artist from New York (where the family had lived and become citizens years before the actress returned to sell a house), and her former servant; a doctor, general, countess and girls' school, all become intermeshed in developing the machinery of deliverance. A plot novel is a good thing when the story is so interesting and cleverly worked out. But such a novel can do more than tell the story.

"Escape" stays closer to the "mystery" than the "big novel" classification first of all because that appears obviously the author's intention. The theme or meaning, the writer's view of the situation, are conveyed primarily through atmosphere and intelligent devices, and too little through the characters. There is a deliberate indefiniteness, hinting and not stating, and romantic changes of scene, enlistment of stock characters, and a rather arbitrary delay in explanation. It really is very like a Hitchcock movie, for instance, "The Lady Vanishes" in reverse.

One device which adds more to atmosphere than clarity is the presentation of people and groups with no adequate label of social or economic or educational or moral class. It makes all of them appear rather romantically Bohemian; but it hinders the reader's acceptance of the scene as the dominant or a certainly characteristic picture of Germany. Miss Vance (one expects that to be a pen name) judges Germany in objective manner. She shows there are two problems: the conditions Germany exists in; and the Nazi way of meeting these conditions. The result of the two—whose relative importance she doesn't judge—is the Third Reich, a life destroying, deadly thing. Emmy Ritter, who escapes, and the people and the human qualities and relations centering around her, incarnate a kind of vitality, enemy by definition and not necessarily intellectual conclusion of the Nazi nihilism. This vitality is not too clearly defined in itself. There is an accidental quality to character and happening and a deficiency of hard idea and standards, perhaps intriguing in the story, but not altogether satisfactory as an assertion of life. "Nazi," incidentally, and Germany are never labeled as such.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

BIOGRAPHY

Apostle of Charity, the Life of Saint Vincent de Paul, by Theodore Maynard. New York: The Dial Press. $3.00.

TO THAT IMPORTANT, but still small library of readable lives of the saints comes another welcome addition, Theodore Maynard's "Apostle of Charity," a scholarly, well-written biography of Saint Vincent de Paul.

The first thing to be done in appreciating Saint Vincent, as Mr. Maynard apparently realized, is to destroy the memory of all those plaster-cast statues that would make of him a sickeningly sweet, slightly effeminate and completely obnoxious baby-kisser. As with every male saint so horribly maligned by our current excuse for Catholic statuary, the real man was something quite different—and infinitely preferable.

Actually Vincent de Paul (1581-1659) was a tough French peasant who entered the priesthood for motives less than noble, but overcame his personal ambition and weakness for an easy life to reach the heights of humility and heroism. Actually he was a man of naturally impatient and irritable temperament who by sheer struggle and prayer made himself into a model of gentle courtesy. Actually he was a man with an inexhaustible capacity for hard work and attention to detail who, with the grace of God, organized and personally performed what was probably a larger volume of works of mercy than has been organized or performed before or since.

In technique Saint Vincent fell somewhere between the red-tape school of institutional charity and the catch-as-catch-can enthusiam of our American *Catholic Workers.* That is, he believed strongly in organization and method, and nearly every case helped was first investigated to determine need. But like the *Catholic Worker,* none of his workers were paid, there was no discrimination because of race, creed or color, and the emphasis was always on the warmth of personal kindness that sees in every drunk or beggar an image of Our Lord Himself.

This emphasis on the spiritual element, even in the corporal works of mercy, was the keystone of Saint Vincent's work. As he said, "Give me a man of prayer, and he will be capable of everything." Few remember too that the first, and to him most important, job was to found the Congregation of the Mission, an order of secular mission-preachers who traveled through France, Italy, Ireland, Scotland and Poland, restoring and quickening a faith that had been ravaged by the Reformation and weakened by an incredibly ignorant and venal clergy.

The lay Congregations of Charity (father of our Vincent de Paul Societies) were usually formed, in fact, as a parochial expression in good works for the faith inspired by these missionaries. To Vincent, in short, love of God was inseparable from love of neighbor, and vice versa. In passing it should be noted that originally there were congregations for women as well as men and that the women did the more effective work.

Beside the projects mentioned, Saint Vincent's prodigious labors also included the following: organization of the famous Sisters of Charity, the first non-cloistered religious and the first devoted entirely to the works of mercy; formation of the Ladies of Charity, composed exclusively of noble dames who financed most of Vincent's undertakings and did real service in visiting the sick and poor of Paris; foundation of seminaries, schools, orphanages and Houses of Hospitality that emphasized rehabilitation and the teaching of crafts; prison reform, especially among the unfortunate galley-slaves of the French navy; retreats

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for clergy and laity; general reform of the French clergy; and finally, tremendous efforts in relieving the desolation that marked the Fronde, France's bitter civil war of 1648-1652. Apparently war in Saint Vincent's day was scarcely more human than our modern madness.

Mr. Maynard has done a first-rate job in describing the monumental deeds of this great saint and in bringing out the personal qualities that made those deeds possible and combined to produce an extremely attractive and lovable man. His book is highly recommended, and it is to be hoped that he will do the same for other saints whose reputations have suffered from the slander of those horrible statues.

JOHN C. CORT.

Alexander Hamilton, by David Loth. New York: Carrick and Evans. $3.00.

DAVID LOTH has written his first biography of an American. Since 1928, when his study of the Brownings appeared, his subjects have been men far apart in time and quality, Lorenzo the Magnificent, Charles II, Philip II and now Hamilton. Qualities that make his earlier works important and attractive are here: vigor in style and historical insight, with the restraint of irony to control the zest of his enthusiasms. He calls this book "the portrait of a prodigy." Some biographers of Hamilton have been hypnotized by excessive admiration; others have allowed mental myopia to distort fairness. David Loth, fascinated of course, writes with honest, critical detachment. He exhibits all the angles in the graph of the prodigy's ambitious career: his failure and success as soldier, lawyer, financier, statesman.

If he has searched the sources casually mentioned in the bibliography, "109 volumes and several hundred miscellaneous pieces in the Library of Congress," he has found nothing new for his portrait, or is waiting for a later date to complete a study of Hamilton's thought in relation to its influence in our history. What the author has achieved with his use of known facts from accepted sources of information is an impartial view of greatness, informal, "charming"; a comprehensive character study of a personality and a mind working with deepest interest for the nation, not for any section of the country, in the days when "united" was an awkward word for the states.

Historical specialists may shrug irked shoulders over lapses here and there. Perhaps Mr. Loth has not been as impressively eager as he might be to sift the bright filings of research scholarship. Washington's "Farewell Address" is a case in point. But this book should have many editions; its perfection of detail will grow. Small defects cannot alter the volume's real importance: the persuasive proofs that Hamilton's greatest successes were unselfish ones, a share in composing a nation's security. Hamilton was a genius. The author of this book possesses a modest measure of the same power. He makes ideas exciting.

DANIEL S. RANKIN.

The Last Tragedian, by Otis Skinner. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. $3.00.

THIS IS one of the most satisfying of books on Edwin Booth because it tells his story largely through letters written by Booth himself. Mr. Skinner has chosen them with great skill, and with his own connecting comment they paint a portrait of the great tragedian "in his habit as he lived." With the exception of the letters to the friend of his youth, David Anderson, which are brim full of life and humor, Booth's correspondence brings out

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poignantly the essential melancholy of the man, a melancholy progressively enhanced by his personal tragedies: first, the death of his first wife, Mary Devlin; second, the assassination of Lincoln by his favorite brother; and last, the mental aberations of his second wife. Of his letters those to Richard Henry Stoddard are probably the most interesting. This friendship so close and understanding was for some mysterious reason broken, and it is a pity that none of the letters give the slightest hint of the reason. But the letters themselves show that Booth was not only a great actor, but a master of the written word. And it is not difficult to see from them why Booth was a tragedian. All his life and thought was informed with the tragic spirit, an inheritance perhaps from the half-mad father whom he loved so dearly.

And yet the letters to David Anderson showed that the comedian also existed in this tortured soul, and it was the combination of these qualities which made him unique among the actors of his period. Booth was oddly enough not a man of the theatre. Like Duse he really disliked it. He loved the drama itself, but the life of the player outraged what was deepest in him. And yet he remained an actor to the end, because, as he wrote, it was the one profession to which he was suited. The irony of it Mr. Skinner has brought out admirably. Otis Skinner, too, is an actor who is a master of the written word.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

HISTORY

Mohammed and Charlemagne, by Henri Pirenne. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. $3.50.

THE EFFECT on the West of the Mohammedan conquests in northern Africa and southern Europe and their weakening of the Byzantine Empire is of extreme interest and the occasion of much controversy. To the solution of this problem Henri Pirenne's book is a valuable and brilliant contribution. I'm not sure that I accept all of his interpretations, but he has helped me greatly to realize some implications of Islam's victories in the occidental world. "Mohammed and Charlemagne" is rightly considered to be his crowning triumph. The fire of his genius, the boldness of his mind, his profound learning and vivid pen make this volume pleasant reading.

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In his picture of the Roman Empire after the barbarian invasions from the north, it is the evolutionary as opposed to the catastrophic view that is presented. "The period inaugurated by the Barbarians within the Empire introduced no absolute historical innovation," says the author. The German tribes did not destroy the culture of the Empire and the essential character of the area formerly ruled from Rome still retained its Mediterranean coloration. The only new feature was the plurality of successor states, which were not national in character but merely fragments of the original unity which they replaced. England was the only exception. The reason for this lies in the fact that England was the least Romanized of the provinces and the Germanic tribes that overran it had never been subjected to Rome nor come in close contact with its civilization. It is not strange therefore that Roman civilization vanished in England and gave way to a pagan, Anglo-Saxon world. However, the Mediterranean cultural unity which marked the ancient world remained intact. *Mare nostrum* was still the center of social life.

But this unity of the Mediterranean was shattered by the rapid and unforeseen expansion of Islam. Northern Africa and Spain faced toward Baghdad and the western Mediterranean having become a Mussulman lake could no longer be the focal point of the East and the West and thus be the meeting place of commerce and thought. Being in a state of siege with traffic between the Orient and Europe practically non-existent, the center of the West's life shifted northwards. This resulted in the decline of the Merovingian dynasty and the rise of the northern Carolingian line. Charlemagne became, therefore, the overlord of the West because of the Mohammedan challenge. His extraordinary political power and the rise of his dynasty is inexplicable, if Islam's presence in Africa and Europe are not taken into account. It is interesting to note that whereas the Merovingian monarchy was secular, the Carolingian Empire was religious in character.

Casting about for a champion for the Church, the Pope attracted the new dynasty to himself and so tied the fortunes of the Church with the newly created Holy Roman Empire. With the end of commerce between the East and the West and the increasing dominance of the Church in Europe and the incapacity of Charlemagne to devise a powerful central administrative body, the stage is set for the coming of the feudal lords and the Middle Ages.

There is an unhappy phrase on p. 322 about the Pope "adoring" Charlemagne upon crowning him, when what is meant is that the Pope recognized the temporal sovereignty of Charlemagne.

JOSEPH CALDERON.

England and the Continent, by Carlo Scarfoglio. New York: Fortuny's. $2.75.

THE YEAR 1914 marked the beginning of the twelfth war of continental coalition fought on the continent of Europe in the space of two hundred and thirty-five years, either inspired or promoted or caused by some alliance headed by England, and, of course, also participated in by England. There was a continuous fighting period of seventy-five years in all, and one hundred and sixty years of peace, which makes a mathematical average of a war every twentieth year. This is Signor Scarfoglio's indictment of one of the world's better known aggressor nations, which is currently participating in the thirteenth war of continental coalition.

Signor Scarfoglio lightly and voluntarily assumes the dismal burden of explaining to an English public in what

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light the relations between England and the rest of Europe appear to the mind of an Italian Catholic political scientist. The book was manufactured and printed in Great Britain. There is a slight possibility that some uninhibited Englishman may read it before the fourteenth war of continental coalition; but under existing circumstances it is indeed fortunate that Signor Scarfoglio is in Italy and that only his good-humored criticism of certain hypocritical and gluttonous elements in English imperialism is in an irate English censor's purple hands.

The witty and erudite author declares that England's continental wars have been fostered by self-righteous Whigs, who were always convinced that they were fighting the Lord's battles against a sinful enemy, and that it is the Tories who have contributed to European appeasement. The book ends with a postscript on the Munich Conference which lauds Mr. Chamberlain as a moral hero. Perhaps Signor Scarfoglio would blandly assert today that, after two hundred and fifty years of Whig war-mongering, a Tory Prime Minister is entitled to at least one Holy War. JOHN J. O'CONNOR.

PHILOSOPHY

Saint Thomas and the Greeks, by Anton C. Pegis. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press.

THE ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY of Marquette University presents in the present volume the third of its annual Aquinas Lectures. Professor Pegis, the lecturer for 1939, is a member of the faculty of Fordham University Graduate School and a fellow of the Toronto Institute of Mediaeval Studies. He has selected the problem of creation as the focal point of his discussion of the philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas in its relations to the thought of the Greeks. The first part of the lecture includes a careful analysis of the dilemma described by Professor Lovejoy in his recent work, *The Great Chain of Being*. The difficulty amounts to this: the will of God necessarily embraces all possible products of the creative act and so God must of necessity create all possible things —but it is also true that God's will is free and so He should be able to create some possible things and to refrain from creating others. Lovejoy professes to find this internal contradiction within the world-view of Saint Thomas, as well as in earlier philosophy. Restating the problem, Professor Pegis places it in its proper historical context and shows that it involves a contrast between two incompatible notions of Divine goodness. Either God is the "essence of goodness, is self-sufficient and therefore does not have to produce any universe. If He does, He does so freely, and a world so produced is entirely contingent," or, "God cannot be the essence of goodness unless He produces all possible worlds or a world of all possibilities." In the first view the Divine will is free; in the second It is necessitated. The latter half of the lecture is a brilliant attempt to show that not only are these contradictory views not found to co-exist in the thought of Saint Thomas, but that they are not even present in the philosophies of Plato and Plotinus. Noteworthy points here are the emphatic denial that the Greeks had any real notion of creation and a development of the lecturer's already well-known position on the relation of the study of the history of philosophy to philosophy itself. Twenty pages of excellent notes attest to Professor Pegis' fine grasp of the subject. The work is readable, informative and contributes greatly to the clarification of a most profound problem. VERNON J. BOURKE.

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THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR, who have 56 houses and one novitiate in the United States alone, are celebrating the centenary of their foundation this year. Each of their houses shelters destitute old people, providing for both their material and spiritual needs. The aged themselves, who must be at least 60 for admission, are expected to help as they can in the upkeep of each house.

It was a hundred years ago that Jeanne Jugan took an aged widow, who was destitute and blind, into her straitened home. Her second charge was an old servant who had stayed on with her employers after the French Revolution and exhausted her meager savings to sustain them. This heroic woman had then begged on the streets for the wherewithal to support her former patrons until they died; then she found refuge with Jeanne Jugan. Such was the start in St. Servan, Brittany, of the charitable work which now comprises hundreds of houses throughout the world.

On October 15, 1840, two young women, Marie Jamet and Virginie Trédaniel, with the encouragement of Abbé Le Pailleur, went to live in the original house. In a short while they rented a larger apartment on the ground floor and began caring for a dozen people. Jeanne Jugan sustained the establishment by going out among the townspeople with a basket on her arm for donations in money and kind. When she secured an old convent of the Daughters of the Cross, her charges increased to 65, about as many as the villagers would support. So she spent the next ten years establishing other houses in various cities of France. Jeanne Jugan spent the last 27 years of her long life in retirement at the motherhouse virtually unrecognized as foundress.

In the early days the Little Sisters of the Poor were so destitute that inability to buy the materials is believed to have delayed their adoption of a habit; like their wards they dressed in whatever was given them. The constitutions of the order are based on the Rule of Saint Augustine; to the simple and perpetual vows of poverty, chastity and obedience is added that of hospitality. The work is supported primarily by begging.

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